

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4751

### 1. Name

Historic 1720 – 1726 Portugal Street  
and / common

### 2. Location

street & number 1720 – 1726 Portugal Street  
city, town Baltimore  
state & zip code Maryland 21231 county

### 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

### 4. Owner of Property

name  
street & number telephone  
city, town state & zip code

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Baltimore City Land Records liber  
street & number Clarence Mitchell Courthouse folio  
city, town Baltimore State Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title  
date federal state county local  
depository for survey records  
city, town state & zip code

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## 7. Description

Condition		Check One	Check One
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move: _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of four two-bay-wide, two-story brick houses with shed roofs were built by Edward W. Robinson, the same builder as the houses on the 400 block of S. Regester St., but slightly later, with the shed roof of the Italianate style. In many cases, alley houses such as these are still occupied by working class families and many are still covered with the formstone put on in the 1950s or 1960s. In this case one house remains with its painted brick façade, the others have been formstoned.

The houses are two stories in height, 12' wide, and occupy lots 51' deep. Each two-room-deep house has a one-story brick rear kitchen addition somewhat narrower than the house. The houses are constructed in common bond, which was always painted. Although the houses have later-style Italianate shed roofs, they have the simple brick corbelled cornice of the earlier, gable-roofed houses Robinson built on the east side of Regester St. Chimneys are located at the rear end of the kitchen addition. A flat-linteled sallyport runs back between each pair of houses, to provide service access to the rear yards.

Door and window openings have flat wood lintels. The sills have been completely obscured by the formstone covering on 1720 – 1724 and are replacement brick on 1726. 1726 has 6/6 sash, but all the other windows are filled with 1/1 replacement sash. No original doors survive and the row shows a mix of replacement door styles, all surmounted by a single light transom. The houses sit on low basements, the entrances being reached by a single concrete step.

The houses are basically two rooms deep, with the front room being entered directly from the front door. The front and back rooms of the first floor are separated by a wide opening, with the tightly winding, narrow stairs set in the rear room, in the space between the partition wall and the fireplace. The one-story rear addition served as the kitchen, with its own cooking fireplace.

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## 8. Significance

Period	Area of significance	check one & justify			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theatre	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other: specify	

Specific dates 1874

Builder/Architect Edward W. Robinson

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

These houses are significant as being examples of extremely modest two-story houses built in Fells Point in the period 1855 – 1875 to serve as inexpensive housing for the influx of newly arrived immigrant families seeking work in harbor-related activities or in the first small factories being built at this time. Most of these houses were held as rental property and most were located along narrow alley streets, or, as is the case here, along even narrower courts. In terms of design, the houses are basically astylar—with the Italianate shed roof of houses of the 1870s but without the usual wooden bracketed cornice.

This group of houses was built by Edward W. Robinson, who also built the houses on the north side of Eastern Ave., the east side of Griffin Ct., and both sides of S. Regester St. in this block, all in the early 1850s. The houses were sold and rented to German-American craftsman and laborers. The houses are especially significant since they today serve as housing for local working class immigrant families (now Latin-Americans, who have settled in this part of Fells Point), just as they did when built one hundred and fifty years ago.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse*  
(New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

## 10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property

Quadrangle name

Verbal boundary description and justification

## 11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

Organization The Alley House Project

street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.

city, town Baltimore

date

telephone

state & zip code Maryland 21204

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of rights.

Return to:

DHCP/DHCD

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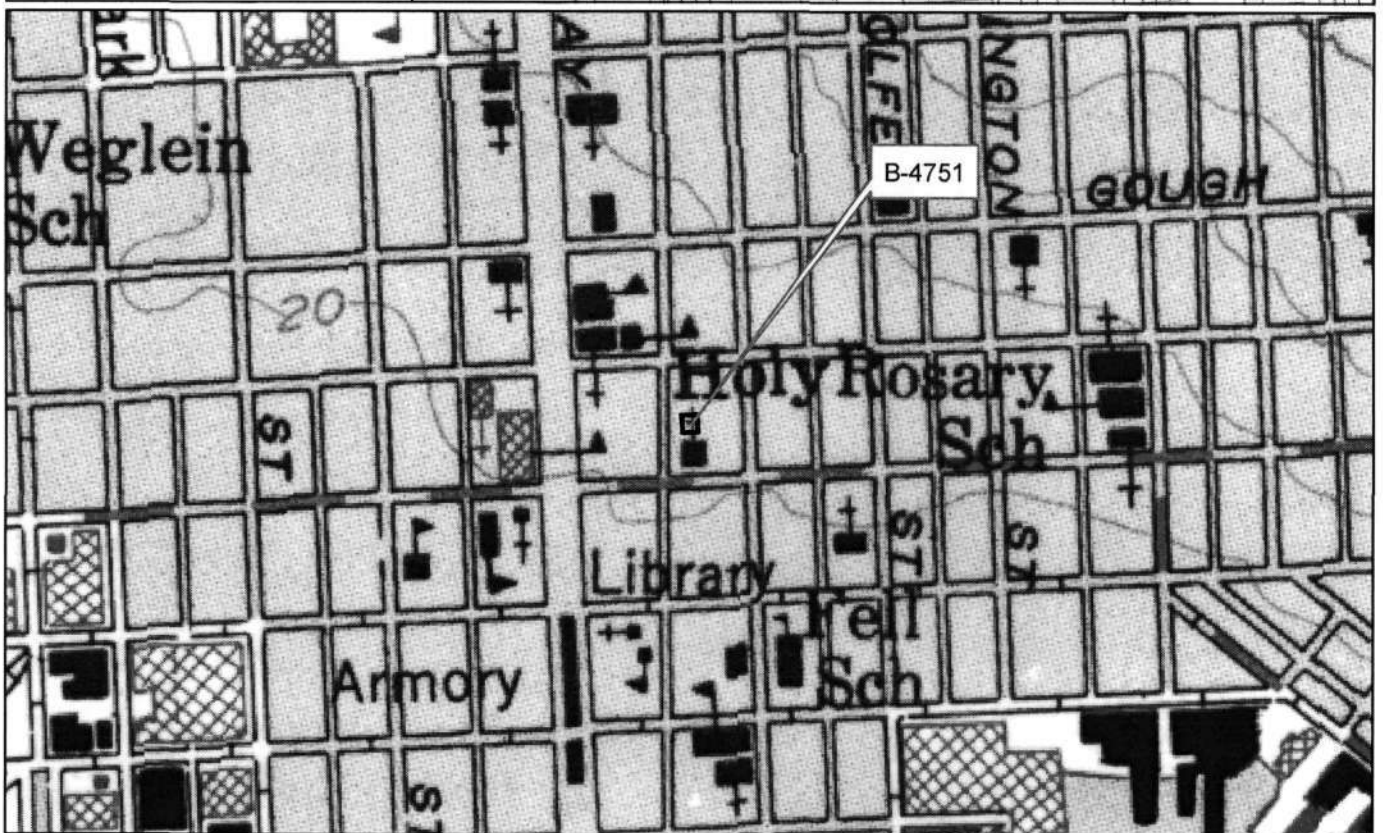
100 Community Place

Crownsville MD 21032-2023





B-4751  
1720-1726 Portugal Street  
Block 1771 Lots 090-093  
Baltimore City  
Baltimore East Quad.





B-4751

1720-1726

Portugal St.

BALTO. MD

M. Hayward

4/00

MD SADO  
1/1